

"THE GLOOMY CASTLE"

Property

of

Johnnie Speer.

"THE GLOOMY CASTLE"

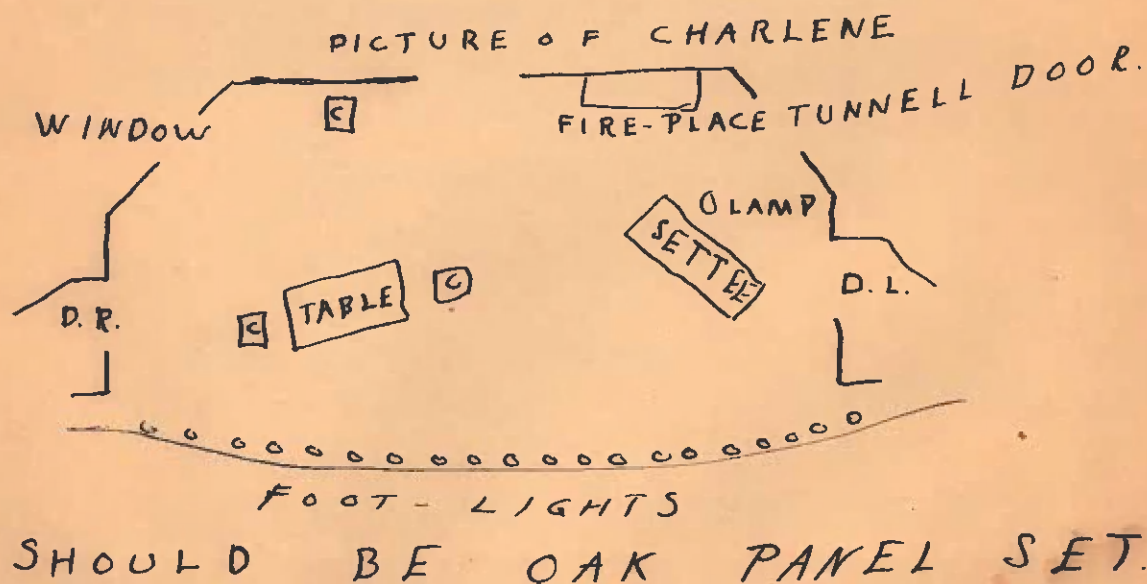
CHARACTERS

Paul Bronson ..... Very neat man of fifty.  
Dr. Arthur Jackson ..... Neat light character comedy.  
Jerry Jiggs ..... Very young juvenile.  
Jenkins ..... Typical old servant.  
Aunt Fanny ..... Neat old lady.  
Thankfull ..... Soubrette lead.

PROPS

Small library table  
Picture of Charlene  
Three chairs  
Flood light  
Large suit case  
Small foot stool  
Gilt paper crown  
Two sashes  
Floor lamp

Fire-place  
Cabinet door that rises  
One Settee  
Curtains to draw on window  
Small locket  
Sofa pillows  
Gilt paper circlet  
Candlestick with prism  
Silken cord





" THE GLOOMY CASTLE "

Paul Bronson

(enters L. after opening. warms hands at fire. Looks to see that no one is watching him, and then goes slowly to cord in C. pulls cord and panel slowly raises revealing picture of a beautiful young woman. He gazes at the picture fondly for a moment) Charlene! My beautiful Charlene! All these years and still I cannot forget you! (bitterly yanks cord and panel drops)

Jorkins

(knocks on D. R.) Master Bronson! Master Bronson! (opens door) A ghost, sir, she's been trying to scale the garden wall and come over in your land. The gardner saw her first sir, and oh forgive me, but she was the exact image of---

Paul

Who? Who? Don't stammer! Who? (beats floor with cane)

Jorkins

Do be careful. Your leg, sir. Remember your father died of just such an injury.

Paul

Well, then don't get me excited with your ghost yarns. It's only some mischeivous fillage imp playing a joke on me---trying to get into my estate. But I shall not permit even a "ghost" to break my rule of twenty years. (bell of stage) Go answer the door.

Jorkins

Very good, sir.

Paul

And remember no more ~~ghhss~~. That's my old friend Doctor Jackson at the door, but remember no more ghosts.

Jorkins

Yes sir---no more ghost---but this was a ghost---

Paul

Get out!

Jorkins

(bows) Very good sir! (exits D. R.)

Jorkins Paul

Blasted pesky servant! (feels leg) Oh what pain! What misery! Bah!

Jackson

(enters D. R. very jovial humor) Well, good morning old sore head!

Paul

Good morning, bludder button!

Jackson

Now that's a fine way to talk to a friend---your only friend in the village---and besides your private physician. Why if you don't treat me good, I'm liable to give you medicine that will make worse.

Paul

Bah! It's a cinch you haven't given me any medicine that would make me any better.

Jackson

Tut! Tut! Paul, old boy, I just passed somebody who made me think of old times---twenty years ago.

Paul

Your old sweetheart Miss Fanny Parsons, I suppose.

Jackson

Yes. There she was as fresh and as beautiful as ever, but she looked me straight in the eye as though I did not exist.

Paul



Paul

What did you expect her to do? She hasn't spoken to you in twenty years, not since---

Jackson

Not since I tried to help you elope with her sister. I love her Paul. I can't help it, even if I am getting past the rifty line.

Paul

Forget her, old man! Ah, Arthur, what damned old fools we've been, you and I---haven't we---wasting our lives over two girls who---who (voice breaks, then becomes loud and angry) Damn it! Who didn't care whether we lived or died.

Jackson

But they did care---Fanny loved me with all her heart and soul, and her little sister Charlene worshipped you!

Paul

Yes---and proved it by marrying a psalm singing, poverty stricken minister missionary in Arkansas! Hump she must have worshipped me

Jackson

All right, we'll drop the subject since it puts you on the outs with the world, but, Paul, do you know who has come to live with Miss Fanny Parsons---

Paul

How should I know? I haven't spoken to her for twenty years. I have no use for her. You see I even have my shades pulled down on the windows in this room, so that I won't look out and see her ugly house sitting next door to mine.

Jackson

Well, any way a new physician has taken up headquarters at her place.

Paul

What another doctor?

Jackson

Yes, I'm quite worried for fear my practice may become somewhat smaller. Everywhere I go I find she's---

Paul

Is the Doctor a she?

Jackson

You don't think a he would be living in the same house with a spinster lady like Fanny Parsons. This little doctor is a girl with golden hair, blue eyes---mind, you she has already cured three of my patients.

Paul

What? How?

Jackson

By a little game she calls "The Thankful Game"

Paul

Thankful game!

Jackson

Yes, its a little idea she has that makes every one glad that they aren't any worse off than they already are. She has worked some marvelous cures---after curing all the people with just imaginary ills, she has started on the cripples---and so I have invited her up to see you!

Paul

The devil you have! Well she'll have to unlock three padlocked gates---climb over a six-foot hedge---mow down a bodyguard of able bodied men, and bowl over a couple of blood hounds to get into the presence of this cripple.

Jackson

Exactly! That's what I told her, but your padlocks, and body guards only delighted her. "I'm thankful he's so hard to reach



she chirped "For I'll be all the more thankful when I do meet old King Grumpy."

Paul

(explosively) Old King Grumpy! The impudent little minx!

Jackson

Well--when she asked me the name of the King who lived in this gloomy castle, I told her Old King Grumpy who hadn't smiled in twenty years.

Paul

That's a nice recommendation for your best friend isn't it? What is she any way? A girl---a woman---a baby---an angel, or a half wit like yourself---

Jackson

I tell you, Paul she's got me going. And when a soured old batchellor like me is lost, there's not much hope for even you.

Paul

Oh I think I could withstand her blandishments! There never was a woman yet I couldn't resist---

Jackson

(pause, narrowly) Not one!

Paul

(sadly after pause) Yes---one!

Jackson

And this one's like her.

Paul

Like her? What do you mean? I say, old man, who is the wierd creature whom you are so bent on bringing here?

Jackson

You really wish to know?

Paul

Yes. You've roused my curiosity.

Jackson

Well then---she's Charlene's daughter.

Paul

Charlene's daughter!

Jackson

Yes, and what is more the living breathing image of Charlene's ~~daughter~~ She is living with her aunt Fanny.

Paul

(in a daze) Charlene's daughter! Little Charlene's daughter!

Jackson

Coming to cure you of all your grouchiness to make you a different man.

Paul

(as he hears knocking in D. L. U.) Listen! Where's that coming from

Jackson

From the tunnel.

Paul

The tunnel? Nonsense---that tunnel has been opened since---

Jackson

(goes to D. L. U.) Here I am. Thankful! Come on in. (opens door admitting thankful)

Paul

(staring at her) Charlene's daughter!

Jackson

(presenting her and bowing) His Majesty! The King!

Thankful

(real deep courtesy) How do you do!

Paul

(passes hands over eyes, the voice pleases him, faintly smiles)



Thankful

You smiled! You smiled! I'm so thankful I came. (laughing with girlish delight, she skips toward him)

Paul

Stop!

Thankful

(stops short and balances on one foot) Oh please forgive me--- King Grumpy.

Paul

Don't call me that! Stop that bowing and scraping. I'm not a King and I'm not grumpy and I want you to quit standing on one foot like an ostrich, and don't flit about the room like a will-o-the-wisp, but humanize into a child and let me look at you.

Thankful

((stiffens her legs) How's this?

Paul

(looks at her for a long time, then sits down, and passes hand over eyes)

Thankful

Please forgive me, sir? Have I pained you?

Paul

It 's nothing. I---I'm not well. You see---I---I've broken my leg.---

Thankful

Oh how lovely!

Paul

Lovely!

Thankful

Why yes, it gives you something so easy to be Thankful about. (smilingly) Aren't you glad it isn't your neck?

Paul

My neck---good heavens!

Thankful

Why, yes---for then you'd be dead instead of just "shrivelled up" Then you wouldn't be alive to be Thankful.

Paul

Humph! If you'd been through the sorrow I've been through, you'd know there was nothing in life to be Thankful about. (mournfully rubs leg as if in pain) Only things to make me miserable!

Thankful

Well, since you seem to love being miserable so well! you can be thankful you've got so many things to make you miserable.

Paul

Who said I loved being miserable, Miss Jump at Conclusions, sit down!

Thankful

(sits down and looks about the room) My you must be rich. This is such a perfectly elegant castle---so beautiful but so gloomy. But then with a King Grumpy ruling in it you couldn't expect it to be other-wise. You know I live next door to you with my Aunt Fanny. She won't tell me anything about you, so I met good Dr. Jackson one day and he told me all about you. He said you needn't me to come and teach you the Thankful Game! I've been teaching everybody in town. Gee, I just love people! My aunt Fanny is cross with me sometimes, but I just say I'm Thankful, because if she hadn't of sent for me when my daddy died---I---I wouldn't have had no where to live--and then it would be hard to think of Something to be Thankful about.

Paul

Where did you get this brilliant Thankful Game, little girl?



Thankful

My father inventied it. When you're a half starved missionary in Arkansaw you have to think hard of what you are thankful for. Oh I miss my daddy, but I just keep on thinking of the Thankful game---and sometimes I'm Thankful he's gone---because---he won't have work where he's going. At least I never heard of people working in Heaven, did you? And you know time heals all wounds.

Paul

Yes---only time doesn't heall all wounds----not all!

Thankful

(going to him) Why your Majesty you look ill---have I hurt you!

Paul

No---it's an old hurt; one that time hasn't healed. (wipes tear from eye) Come, closer, little one---there's mist before my eyes. I--I can't see you.

Thankful

Of course you can't. It's so dark in here. Wilt I will open the window and let the sunshine in! There! (skips to French window draws curtains and sunshine fills the room) Now we can be Thankful it isn't raining today. But look there's a little tiny rainbow in the sky! Do you know what the rainbow means? It is God's promise to his people that he is still in Heaven above (sees candle stick with prisms on it on mantle) Oh look a pretty prismn---I'll set it in the window to reflect the sunshine and then, you won't have the heart to ever shut the curtains again

Paul

Those curtains haven't been drawn in twenty years!

Thankful

Why, your Majesty!

Paul

(not curtly, but unsmilingly) I'm not "Your Majesty" I'm only a man.

Thankful

Please don't be only a man, sir! Make believe you're a king, for then I can make believe that you are my king---the king My Mother used to tell me about---the King of her fairy tales!

Paul

(dreamily) The story --your mother told you---

Thankful

Yes! Would you like to hear it? It's a beautiful story about a King---a princess---and love! Shall I tell it to you? (takes little foot stool to his chair kneels beside him) (without waiting for him to say yes) All right I will! (begins facing audience) Well---once upon a time---

Paul

Wait! Is this story true?

Thankful

Well, it's mostly true, sire---at least that's always what my mother said when I asked her. Well, any way once upon a time there was a princess who loved a king and he loved her. There castles werenot very far apart. Only a stone wall and a prickly hedge between them. You---You---like Aunt Fanny's house and your castle. Well the Lovely Princess father didn't approve of the King marrying his daughter because the King's people were very fast---and they opposed his political life. Whenever the princess went about the town some one went with her to see that she did speak to her King. Well, one day he passed by his loved ones side and thrust a note in her hand in which he begged her to elppe and if willing to give hima secret signal---



Paul

Two candles in the window instead of one---

Thankful

Why your majesty---do know this story too---

Paul

I think I've heard it some where before---go on/ He begged her to run away.

Thankful

She was willing and placed the candles in the window. The next time the King saw her he thrusts another note in her hand saying he had a secret passage dug from his castle to hers, and for her to signal the first good opportunity to escape! So she waited and waited and one night a great fire broke out.

Paul

The postoffice burned down---

Thankful

Why it is the same story after all.

Paul

Yes it is the same story--after all. What then?

Thankful

Just as they were about to make their escape through the tunnel the two lovers were caught by the father of the princess he snatched her away from the King, and then Princess never saw the Beautiful King any more. (seeing his tears) It is a sad story isn't it, your Majesty. My mother used to weep when she told me the story.

Paul

(quickly, savagely) You mean that? She wept?

Thankful

Sometimes she could hardly go on---the story hurt her so

Paul

Go on---tell me more---what happened after she was torn for the King's arms---my story ended there--

Thankful

Well, after that the cruel father sent the heartbroken princess far away where she could never see her beautiful king any more--then one day her father died, leaving her a message that she had killed him by her conduct, and that she must wash away her crime by going into the church and bring souls to Christ!

Paul

And she obeyed?

Thankful

Yes, though she never ceased to love her beautiful King. She finally married another man---a poor missionary like my father--but she always loved the beautiful king---and every night she prayed for him---and when the little child was born it had eyes like the King's. Everyone wonder how the little child got such eyes---because on neither the mother nor the fathers side were they to be found---but the Princess knew! And she called them "memory eyes" for they were the eyes of her beautiful king---whom she had never ceased to love---The end!

Paul

Oh, you're sure the princess never forgot her King!

Thankful

Not till her dying day. Nor did my mother forget him either. even though he was only a king in a Fairy tale. Why the last thing she said to me before she died---was to pray for him. And I do everynight---and ask God to make him Thankful!

Paul

And he has heard your prayer at last. The King knows now that his darling was true to him to the last. He 's suffered, he's



lived the life of a lonely old hermit for twenty years but now he's Thankful---he's glad. He thought she was rickie and did not care for him; But he knows now, little mamory eyes--my little memory eyes!

Thankful

(drawing back) Why, I don't understand your Majesty---I am not the real memory eyes.

Paul

Oh yes you are! Go to the wall there. Go to the wall there, if you will---little one--(rises) Place your hand on that cord.

Thankful

This one, sire?

Paul

Yes---pull slowly.

Thankful

(pulls cord slowly and cabinet panel moves up revealing a picture of her mother) Oh! (stands transfixed for a moment) Mother! Mother! My own darling mother! (holds hands out appealingly to picture) Come back to me---nobody loves me---nobody wants me---I try to be glad, but Oh mother dear, I want to be wanted---I want to be loved---please---come back! Please! (sinks on sofa sobbing)

Paul

(forgetting his lameness and crossing to her) Now you understand. I am the King and your beautiful mother was the Princess, and you are my little memory eyes who has prayed for my happiness all of these years? My little memory eyes. Mine! Mine! How happy I am now. And I didn't think it possible in all my loneliness.

Thankful

Loneliness! Then you're lonely too?

Paul

Desperately! Hungrily! I have needed a woman's hand and a child's presence all these years!

Thankful

A child's presence---why I---I am only a child. Will I do. Oh please good Mister King may I come here to your gloomy castle and live.

Paul

(tenderly) You would like to stay in my castle and be my little girl?

Thankful

Yes, let me please. Aunt Fanny doesn't want me---she told me so the day I came---she said she just let me come because I was an orphan---and because I was her sister's child. Oh, good king beautiful Mr King---it's so hard to be thankful---when you're not wanted. Say you want me, won't you please?

Paul

Wait you! From the bottom of my lonely heart---from the depths of my lonely soul!

Thankful

Then I'll go tell Aunt Fanny I'm moving. She'll be Thankful, because she doesn't want me. And I'll be thankful because you do want me! (exits L.) You just wait!

Paul

I'll wait gladly joyfull---always!

Jackson

(enters R.) Well did she cure the old cross patch!

Paul

Cure me! I'm a new man---a new man I tell you. Think of it, Arthur. she loved me! Charlene---my little Charlene loved me



-----loved me unto the end. My God! If I had only known---  
if I had only known---(covers face with hands) And now she comes.  
Her little girl. ---my little girl! Oh, Arthur, I must have her.  
I must! I must!

Jackson

You---you want Thankful?

Paul

I'm going to adopt her!

Jackson

You're crazy. Do you think for a moment that Fanny Parsons would give up her own flesh and blood, least of all to man she has not spoken to in twenty years.

Paul

But she doesn't want her.. She told her so. Think of the cruelty of telling a poor lonely little heart that she wasn't wanted. But I want her and she'll be here today.

Jackson

With her aunt Fanny after her like a hungry wolf. By Jove! Here's where I beat a hasty retreat. Good day.

Paul

Wait, don't go---that's just what you want old Fanny Parsons to do. She hasn't spoken to you for twenty years---now's your chance to make her speak. Why, you don't know what might happen.

Jackson

More likely for her to crown me with a chair instead of speaking to me!

Paul

Well, at least that would show you that she thought of you!

Jackson

Well, you cheerful grave digger!

Paul

Aren't you game to take a chance?

Jackson

You got the right word! It's a chance and a fine chance. But I'll take it---if it kills me! I'll stick! (goes to him)

Paul

Brave boy! (shakes his hand)

Thankful

(enters D. L.)(large suit case clothes under arm, two hats on head, brightly) Well I've moved!

Paul

(embraces her) Thankful!

----- NUMBER ONE -----  
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(close in)

(Curtain rises discovering Paul dressed with a paper gilt crown on his head. Jackson wears a gilt circlet on his head, and has a sash thrown around his shoulder. they are laughing and eating nice cream.)

Thankful

Your Majesty, you tell very entertaining stories. Now, Doctor Jackson, it's your time to tell a story in the court of good fellows.

Jackson

All right! Here goes once upon a time a pretty little girl came into the lives of two lonely old batchellors and made them both happy. The end!

Paul

That's no story---that's the truth!



Thankful

Oh aren't we all just so happy and Thankful. It seems we have known each other for ever.

Jackson

Well, who knows? Perhaps we knew each other in some previous existence.

Thankful

Some previous existence? Why maybe that's where I've seen your face before, Dr. Jackson. In some previous existence!

Jackson

Very likely--

Paul

Yes, or in the Rogue's gallery'.

Jackson

Or in the Hall of Fame!

Thankful

No---but I've never been to either of those places, but I recall your face somewhere---

Paul

Maybe it was on a bull dog!

Jackson

Whoever heard of a good looking bull dog?

Thankful

No---but the first time I met Dr. Jackson, I knew I'd seen him somewhere before. I knew I had seen that face. It--it bothered me.

Paul

Ha! I don't wonder! That face would bother most anybody!

Jorkins

(knocks L. and enters) Excuse, sir, but Miss Fanny Parsons is at the door, sir. Shall I let her in.

Paul

Fanny Parsons!

Jackson

Fanny!

Thankful

Good night---it's auntie coming to get me---she's just discovered I was gone---she wasn't home---when I moved.

Jorkins

She insists upon coming in, sir.

Paul

Show her in, Jorkins!

Fanny

(enters L.)

Jorkins

She's in, sir! Very good sir! (exits L.)

Paul

How do you do, Miss Parsons.

Fanny

Where is my niece, Mr. Bronson. I have just been informed---

Thankful

(brightly) Here I am, Aunt Fanny.

Paul

(politely) Will you be seated?

Jackson

(over burdened with polites) Yes, please be seated. (gets chair)

Fanny

(giving him a cold look) No I thank you! Thankful, what does this mean? Come home at once!

Thankful

But I am home, Aunt Fanny. I've moved here.



Fanny

(aghast) Moved here? Are you mad? (sees men) Are you all mad? Am I in a lunatic asylum or a home for the feeble minded?

(they take off their crowns and sashes)

Thankful

But you don't understand, Aunt Fanny, You're in a castle--- and here is his Majesty the King--and Dr. Jackson is a fairy prince.

Jackson

Yes, I'm a little fairy prince!

Fanny

Permit to observe the prince looks more like a goblin! Thankful come home.

Thankful

I can't, auntie. The King needs a child's presence and a woman's hand. And you don't want me so it will be all right.

Fanny

What are you talking about? Stop this argument and come with me. (takes her by hand) I am sorry, Mr. Bronson if you she has annoyed you---

Paul

On the contrary---she has given me great joy! And its my fault, Miss Parsons, about ~~you~~ her remaining here. I asked her to come. I want her! You know why---because she's Chatterene's little girl and so like her! Please let me keep her. Let me adopt her! I'll

Fanny

(aghast) Adopt her? Adopt my niece! My own flesh and blood? Good heavens! (frigidly) Certainly not, Mr. Bronson. Come, Thankfull.

Paul

But she's like a flower---a sensitive plant--and needs warmth and love if she's to thrive---and you don't want her---she told me, herself---

Fanny

(infuriated) She told you I didn't want her? (drawing her to her) Thankfull, what do you mean by telling such an untruth?

Thankful

Untruth! Then --then you've changed! And you do want me? (eagerly) You mean it? Really?

Fanny

Certainly I want you---what a question!

Thankful

Oh, Aunt Fanny, I'm so Thankfull. So Thankfull that you want me! (hugs her, violently and it causes Fannys locket to drop from her neck)

Fanny

Come, Thankfull! (starts)

Thankful

Aunt Fanny, your locket! (picks up the opened locket, looks at it, and then smiles at Dr. Jackson) Dr. Jackson, that's where I've seen your face before!

Jackson

(taking locket quickly) What's that?

Fanny

Thankfull!

Thankfull

The first day ~~she~~ I came here, Aunt Fanny had lost her locket--- I found it---looked at it and there was picture right in it---

Jackson

You---you mean it!



Fanny

It's not true! Give it to me!

Jackson

(holding it tight) But I have a right to see it----

Fanny

(holding out hand demanding) There are no "ifs" ----a child's imagination can find resemblances any where---everywhere.

Jackson

(holding it from her) But if its only a child's imagination, why do you refuse to let me see it?

Fanny

Because I am not accustomed to having my word doubted or my assertions put to proof. I insist upon your giving it to me.

Jackson

Just one look is all I ask.

Fanny

No!

Jackson

Then it must be my picture or you would not object.

Fanny

Don't flatter yourself.

Jackson

Flatter myself? Why you speak mildly. If I though you had worn my picture next to your heart for twenty years---

Fanny

Please! ! You have no right, and I am in no mood to listen. Be good enough to return my locket, Dr. Jackson.

Jackson

Just ---one look!

Fanny

(angry) No!!

Jackson

(opens hand and permits her to take locket) I'm sorry---

Fanny

(cooly) I thank you. Come, Thankful. (starts up L. with her.)

Thankful

(throws arms around Paul's neck) Good bye---my beautiful King---

Paul

You will come again, and often?

Thankful

Every day and many times a day! (kisses him.)

Fanny

(coldly) You must make no rash promises, child. If you knew everything, you would not wish to come! And as for you, Mr. Bronson, I think you have caused enough misery in the Parson household. without asking further recognition.

Paul

No, I caused no misery intentionally. What I did I did for the greatest thing in the world---love!

Fanny

I have no more time to waste with you. Come, Thankful. Good afternoon, gentlemen! (exits L dragging Thankful behind her)

Thankful

(as she exits) I'll be back--your Majesty---I'll be back!

Jackson

(peering after her) Think of it, old man. She's worn my picture twenty years over her heart.

Paul

Beh! She has no heart!

Jackson

If I had only known----my picture over her heart---



Paul

I wonder if she could be mean enough, contemptible enough to keep that child from me!

Jackson

My picture over her heart! She loves me! She loves me! Hi! de! dides! Diddle she loves me---m, picture over heart---all these years. She loves me! She loves me! (kisses Paul)

Paul

Get away! Are you a nut! Have you lost your mind!

Jackson

I'm crazy with joy!

Paul

I'm not---she took my little Charlene's daughter from me---she took the sunshine ---the only sunshine I've had in twenty years away from me---and she'll never come back---

Thankful

(enters from tunnel door) Oh yes she will! I've come back.

Paul

Thankful!

Thankful

I sneaked down in the old tunnel and made my way over here.

Paul

What a cruel cruel old aunt you have, Thankful---how could any one be thankful with an aunt like that.

Thankful

Oh I'm thankful.

Paul

Thankfull for what?

Thankful

Thankfull my aunt wasn't born twins!

\*\*\*\*\* NUMBER TWO \*\*\*\*\*

Jackson

(enters L. all fixed up with flower in button hole) Paul, Paul, you old bear, think what happened today.

Paul

What?

Jackson

She smiled! She was on her way to the grocery store---I met her ---I---I tipped my hat, and she smiled---Miss Fanny Parsons who hasn't smiled in twenty years smiled at me---

Paul

It's a wonder she didn't laugh out loud!

Jackson

Oh I tell you I'm just progressing wonderful! Think of it---my picture over her heart---

Paul

Now you start that again and I'm hit you with this cane!

Thankful

(enters L. dragging Jerry with him) Come on, come on they won't hurt you!

Paul

Thankfull! (looks at Jerry in surprise)

Thankfull

Gentlemen, this is Mr. Jerry Jiggs---escaped from the orphan's home!

Jerry

(viciously) And I aint goin' back neighter!



Thankful  
 He aint got no father---  
 Jerry  
 Nor no mother---  
 Thankfull  
 So I want you to be his father and mthether will, you, your Majesty?  
 Paul  
 What?  
 Jackson  
 Sure! (laughs) Go ahead, Paul, you'd make a wonderful mother!  
 Thankful  
 Jerry aint got nobody to like him, and they treat him mean at the orphans home---I told him---I'd get him a place to stay---  
 Jerry  
 Yes, but I'm no beggar, sir---I can work---honest I can---feel my muscle\*  
 Paul  
 My Doctor there can tell more about your physical condition. Show him!  
 Jerry  
 Sure! (goes to Jackson doubles up muscle and hits him on the arm) How's that!  
 Jackson  
 (jarred) Humph! Wonderful! Whew!  
 Jerry  
 Let me give you an uppercut, huh?  
 Jackson  
 No, thanks! Thanks! I've had a plenty!  
 Thankful  
 Please, adopt him, your majesty---because he' -he'll be so lonesome when I'm away to school---  
 Paula  
 May to school?  
 Thankful  
 Yes, auntie is going to send me way way off to a school---and I won't never see you for a long time---and---  
 Paul  
 The vicious old catamareen!  
 Jackson  
 Don't call her that! Remember she wore my picture over her heart!  
 Paul  
 It should have given her heart failure!  
 Jerry  
 Gee---Miss Thankful---after you're gone I won't never be glad.  
 Thankful  
 Oh yes, you will, Jerry for just think that we love each other---and when we grow up, we are going to be married. Be glad you're going live and have my beautiful King for your father---  
 Jerry  
 But he aint said he was going to take me yet.  
 Thankful  
 But he's going to---aren't you, Beautiful King?  
 Paul  
 Oh well as you and Jerry are going to be married I'll promise to look at the matter any way. As a trustee of the Orphanage, I'm a liberty to have Jerry remain with me till I find out exactly whether or not he and I may be congenial---eh, Jerry? How's that, my good little Samaritan?  
 Thankful  
 Oh that's splendid! And I'm so glad for Jerry's sake---and your sake---and (looks at Doctor) Oh Doctor Jackson, I haven't done anything to make you thankful.



Jackson

Oh yes, you have. That locket! Her picture over my heart---

Paul

Oh great heavens, you've got him started again!

Thankfull

My Aunt Fanny loves that locket better than her own life---

Paul

Don't tell him that!

Thankfull

Every night when she goes to bed---she fondles and caresses it---

Jackson

She kisses me---Hi di diddy!

Thankfull

Sometimes I think she must have been in love with you, Dr. Jackson

Jackson

Oh don't tell me any more! I'm going to fly! I'm going to fly!  
(glides about the room)

Paul

Hold him! Hold him! Get a straight jacket!

Thankfull

Well, good bye---all of you---I---I'm going---remember I'll write you---and I'll always want you to play the Thankfull game.--

Now when I do come back what shall I bring you for a ~~figt~~ gift?

Jackson

Bring me a love message from a beautiful lady with a locket---

Thankfull

My Aunt Fanny has a locket! (goes to Jerry) Now Jerry be a man and don't cry.

Jerry

Aw, who's crying?

Thankfull

What shall I bring you for a gift, Jerry dear, when I come back?

Jerry

(clinging to her) Bring me just you, Thankfull---just you!

Thankfull

You dear! (kisses him) Good bye! Good bye, Beautiful King!  
And what shall I bring you?

Paul

Bring me---a little face that I worship--a little voice that I adore---and two blue eyes that are a proof of a woman's love.  
(very tenderly) Good bye, Little Memory Eyes! (kisses her)

Thankfull

Good bye! (pp to D. L.) Oh there's just one thing else. Dear Beautiful King---you've adopted Jerry ---now there's some one else I want you to take care of while I'm gone?

Paul

Who is it?

Thankfull

Rags! He's a dog I picked up in an ash can. Nobody will want him when I am gone---and I can't take him with me. Will you--please let him come here---to your castle.

Paul

For your sake yes!

Thankfull

Oh I'm so glad. At last Rags will have a father he can love!  
(exits ) Good bye every one! Good bye! (the lights become lower)

Jerry

(unable to hold back tears any longer) She's gone! It seems like the whole world went out with her. See ---even the sun-shines gone!

Paul

Yes---even the sunshine went out with her---the dear little soul!



Jerry

I tried so hard to be Thankfull---but now I can't be Thankfull with her---gone-- She's the only one that ever was good to me. I love her! She was always makin' people glad and thankfull!

Jackson

This old place will seem the gloomy old castle it was before she came now!

Paul

God! how we shall all miss---dear "little Memory Eyes!"

Jackson

And she told me---she told me---she wore her picture over her heart

Paul

Oh shut up!

(scream, noise of squeaking breaks off stage, cries of people) (all run up to window)

Jackson

Look! Some one's been run over in the drive -way!

Paul

Who is it?

Jackson

Your man Jorkins is going down to bring whoever it is up here.

Jerry

(almost a scream) It's Thankfull---

Paul

Thankfull!

Jerry

See---they are bringing her up here---she's hurt---bad!

Jackson

Great Scott. I must go to her at once. (exits L.)

Jerry

I knew it! I knew it! She was too good. God didn't want nothin' good like her to live on this earth---he's taking her away.

Paul

Don't, say that, Jerry---don't say that!

Jorkins and Jackson

(enter carrying Thankfull who is lying limply in their arms) (they place her on the settee) (Jerry runs to her kneels by her side)

Thankfull

Oh, Jerry, ---why, I feel so queer! As---as---if I'd been all drawn up in a knot---and couldn't untie myself! (looks at their worried faces) Oh --please don't look so sad, Beautiful King. And don't cry, Jerry. I'm not a bit hurt! (sits erect moves arms)

Fanny

(off L) Oh where is she? Where's my poor child?

Jackson

Jorkins---call the hospital---and admit Miss Parsons---

Jorkins

Very good sir. (exits L.)

Fanny

(off L. Oh where is she, Jorkins? Tell me where she is) (enters L.

Thankfull

Here I am, Aunt Fanny!

Fanny

(rushing toward her) Oh my poor child---how did it happen--- Are you suffering much---(drops beside her) Oh, my dear---my dear---my dear!

Thankful

(with radiant face) Oh, Aunt Fanny! You called me "dear" for the first time. Maybe if I got really sick you would kiss me.

Fanny

Oh my child---my poor---poor child---(kisses her)



Thankfull

Thank you, Aunt Fanny. (carressing her) It's so good to have people care! Wouldn't it have been lovely if I had been run over when I first came? Then I wouldn't have been so lonely.

Fanny

Oh don't! ---don't---please don't! I can't bear it!

Thankfull

Please don't cry, Aunt Fanny! I'm not hurt! I'm not even scratched or bruised---or bent---(joyfully) I'm well! (looks at them) Why don't you believe me---watch---I'll prove it! I'll stand up---I'll walk! (begins to pull herself together) Then maybe you'll believe--- Look---everybody! (they all watch her intently, tears in their eyes) (lifts her self up gradually) Here I go! (tries to take a step and completely collapses with little gasp of pain) Oh!

Paul

Thankfull!

Thankfull

(astounded, also frightened though not admitting it) Why, I can't stand---I can't walk! What's the matter? Why can't I get up? (assumes frightened expression, feels her knees and legs) My feet are asleep---they won't move!

Fanny

(grabbing Doctor Jackson) Dr. Jackson, don't tell me she's injured that way---promise me she'll get well. That she'll walk again!

Thankfull

(horrified for a moment) Get well? Walk again? Why, Aunt Fanny---what do you mean---If I can't walk, how can I ever be thankfull for anything? (then with determination) Why of course I'll get well I'll walk. Why do you ask? Why do you doubt? (then defiantly) I shall get well! I shall walk! (turns to Jerry) Jerry! (to Fanny) Fanny! (they all turn away from her sadly) Aunt Fanny! Dr. Jackson-Good---good beautiful king---(lights begin to come up a little)

Paul

(with much feeling taking her hands) Why of course, my darling! God wouldn't destroy those little feet when He needed them to run His errands. Of course you'll get well, of course you'll walk!

Thankfull

Oh, you understand! You understand---and look--(pointing to window) The rainbow! My promise! That means God has only borrowed my feet a-little- for a little while---and some day He will give them back to me! (a prayer hands uplifted) Oh, I thank Thee, dear God, ---for Thy beautiful promise! I shall get well---I know---and I shall walk. I'm so Thankfull. So thankfull!

All

Thankfull?

Thankfull

Yes, Thankfull that I aint a centipede with a thousand legs!

\*\*\*\*\* NUMBER THREE \*\*\*\*\*

Jorkins

(enters, turns on all the lights and is fixing up the room)

Paul

(enters) Jorkins, have all the lights along the drive-way been lighted?

Jorkins

Yes, sir---and the lanterns are hanging in the garden. Oh, sir, the house looks like a big forest fire all ablaze with so many lights.



Paul

Just think, Jorkins---three years---three long years has the little girl been away---

Jorkins

And still, sir, we are not sure whether she has been cured or not.

Paul

Don't be a pessimist!

Jorkins

But, sir, that Doctor Jackson, never wrote you that she was cured---he just wrote they were coming back from Europe tonight and--

Paul

Why of course she's cured---I won't have it any other way---haven't you been playing the "thankfull" game, Jorkins, like she told us all to?

Jorkins

Yes sir!

Paul

What are you thankfull for?

Jorkins

I'm thankfull she isn't coming home every day---because I'd have so much work to do---I'm thankful she's coming home---alive and not dead---like I thought she'd be---I'm thankful I'm a live---and not dead like---

Paul

You ought to be- (cutting in on him)

Jorkins

Yes, sir, very good sir---

Paul

Where is my son---- Jerry?

Jorkins

Shaving, sir.

Paul

Shaving?

Jorkins

His face, sir---he says a man of seventeen has a right to a shave---but to be sure sir, there aint anything there to shave---he asked me the other day to shave him. I consented. He said shave "down" I said, "Yes sir, sure and that's all I see to shave!" (exits L.)

Paul

(laughs) How glad I am that little Thankfull made me adopt him. He's been a wonderful pleasure.

Jackson

(enters L. evening dress, with Aunt Fanny, both in evening dress)

Paul! We're back!

Paul

(running to him) Arthur---good old Arthur!

Jackson

Believe me we're glad to be back---three years in Europe ---makes one "thankfull" they were born in the good old U. S. A.

Paul

Welcome home, Fanny---er---a may I call you "Fanny"?

Fanny

You certainly may---Paul!

Jackson

Mrs. Arthur Jackson wif you please!

Paul

What! Arthur, you don't mean you are---

Jackson

We are married!

Paul

Where?



Jackson

In Brazil---where the nuts come from!

Paul

Congratulations to you both---and long may you live---

Jackson

Just think, Paul---she wore my picture over her heart---

Paul

Great Heavens! don't start that again.

Jackson

Well she did---didn't you?

Fanny

Gracious yes! You've told me about it a million times every day. And every time he introduces me to any one he says, "Meet the wife---she wore my picture over her heart for twenty years!"

Paul

I'm so glad for both of you---but Thankfull---my little---

Fanny

She will be here in a little while---she---

Paul

You---you mean she isn't---

Fanny

Now, Paul, we are pledged to absolute secrecy. We can't tell you a thing.

Paul

But the suspense of it all---you must let me know---if she isn't cured, prepare me for the shock---I'll---

Jackson

Now, Paul, we aren't going to tell you a thing---not a thing! By the way, old man, where's Jerry? And how do you feel being the father to---well he must be quite a young man by now.

Paul

Oh he is! He even shaves! Why he's the joy of my life! And he's still head over heels in love with Thankfull!

Fanny

But Paul---

Paul

Now surely you wouldn't put a stumbling block in the way of their marry. Fanny?

Fanny

But Paul! His people! Think of who his parents may have been. Think of what may have been the circumstances of his birth---an orphan who's parents are unknown---

Paul

But I have found out all about that---and Jerry is of a fine old New England family---in fact his parents came over on the Mayflower. He is related to the Wilton J. Newmans.. It was the same old story of the daughter of a wealthy family marrying a poor man. She dies when the child was born---and the husband at her death, hating the family---hides the boy in the orphanage under an assumed name lest the Newmans recover him.

Fanny

That's splendid! I'm so glad! (noise off stage) Oh that's Thankful now.

Paul

Quick! Tell me is she cured---don't let me be surprised or---

Thankfull

(enters L. beautiful evening gown ---and a little older than at first) Beautiful King!

Paul

Thankfull---you---you're well---you're cured---you can walk!



Thankful

And how how thankfull and glad I am---everybody is so glad to see me. Really--honestly---I'm glad it all happened!

Paul

Dear little Thankfull, you haven't changed a mite!

Thankful

I have too. I've become a young woman. Where's Jerry?

Paul

I'll call him. He's been fixing all up for you, Thankfull!

(calls R.) Jerry! Jerry.

Jerry

(off stage R.) Coming, dad. (enters R. ♀ (in tuxedo) Thankfull!

Thankfull

Jerry! Ohhh---how nice you look!

Jerry

Gosh you do too!

Thankfull

Jerry!

Jerry

Thankfull!

Thankfull

Oh!

Jerry

Gee!

Jackson

Gosh!

Paul

Ha!

Fanny

Mercy!

Paul

(whispers to them to leave the two lovers alone, they all wink and slip out L.)

Jerry

And, Thankfull, you're cured---you can walk!

Thankfull

Certainly I can walk---and run---hop---skip and dance! (looks at him) Well, aren't you glad?

Jerry

Why, I---I don't know whether I'm glad or not!

Thankfull

Glad or not? Jerry, you're horrid!

Jerry

Yes, but you don't understand. You see, you're not what I expected I wanted you to need me---and---and lean on me---and everything.

Thankfull

Why, Jerry!

Jerry

But now you won't do any of those things.

Thankfull

Oh yes, I will, Jerry. I promise! I'll be just a weak and leany as a kitten. Look at me---seem (sways a bit) I'm beginning to wobble already.

Jerry

Oh, Thankfull, always wobble. Promise me.

Thankful

(clasping his arms) I promise!

Jerry

Then, Thankfull, I'm going to kiss you!

Thankfull

Are you?



Jerry

May I?

Thankfull

Why certainly---if we're engaged---that's a part of it---(he starts to kiss her) But wait a minute---are we engaged?

Jerry

Certainly we're engaged. Didn't we promise each other when we were fourteen, and haven't I been true to you all these years?

Thankfull

Really, Jerry, how happy I am that I've found a man I can trust! (offers her lips to be kissed---he kisses her)

Jerry

Thankyou. Thankfull!

Thankfull

Thank you, Jerry. Just think, Jerry, ---engaged!

Jerry

Do you know---Thankfull---I aint what I am---

Thankfull

You--you aint what you am!

Jerry

I mean---well, wouldn't you feel more comfortable if you knew my grandfather was a---Senator or---or a Governor---or something instead of, say---a burglar.

Thankfull

Not a bit! I'd feel worse if anything! Anyway I'm marrying you. Jerry---not your grandfather.

Jerry

Yes, but Thankfull, think of marrying a nameless waif out of an orphanage. Oh!

Thankful

See here, Jerry, are you trying to back out of your proposal?

Jerry

No, Thankfull---I'm trying to make you say something and you won't say it.

Thankfull

No, and I never will say it if it's How-towing to ancestors! We are what we are---and that's the end of it! And besides, please bear this in mind---if you were found in an orphanage, I was reared in a mission!

Jerry

Why didn't you write me you felt that way about it? Then I wouldn't have had my father look me up.

Thankful

(astonished) Look---you up? Jerry Jiggs---you don't mean to tell me you've gone and turned out an aristocrat?

Jerry

(verysheepishly) I---I'm sorry. Thankfull---

Thankfull

You mean that, Jerry?

Jerry

Every word, Thankfull!

Thankfull

Then kiss me, dear---for that is true love! (offers cheek---he kisses it) Thank you, Jerry!

Jerry

And now, I'll tell you what Thankfull, if you'll forgive me for being born well---I'll forgive you for being getting well! Is it a bargain?



Thankfull  
I forgive you, Jerry!

Jerry  
Great! Now let's have one big BIG KISS ON THAT! (takes her in  
arms, they hold embrace for a long time)

(Fanny, Jackson, and Paul, enter quietly, watch them with  
amusement)

Thankfull  
(noticing them) Oh! (turns away embarrassed)

Jackson  
Go ahead! Kiss her again! Then me and Fanny will show you how  
it is really done! (gives Fanny big smack!\*)

FINALE